

REMARKS

The Office issued a 7-way restriction requirement, and additionally required the withdrawal of an eighth claim grouping (claims 29-32).

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement.

This application was filed in 2000. The Office has issued eight Actions. The issues raised by the claims have been narrowed and focused during this prolonged prosecution.

In view of such history, the continued maintenance of the claims in the present application does not appear unduly burdensome on the Office. Rather, restriction at this point seems an unfair imposition on applicants who have paid the necessary excess claim fees repeatedly (2 RCEs have been filed) in reliance on the claims' continued examination.

Subject to such traverse, Applicants provisionally elect to pursue the claims of Group I.

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Respectfully submitted,
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